

# The Message

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*And pluck till time and times are done  
The silver apples of the moon,  
The golden apples of the sun.*

W.B. Yeats

The solid leaf wall  
of this tree is towering  
injunction to a man  
without nerves, mute,  
violently silent except  
for the tiny electric  
sound of his skin  
twitching in the shadows  
where fallen fruit  
stinks like overwrought  
wine...but this too  
is a message  
from the earth  
even he can understand.

Love, the tree speaks  
with its involute tongues,  
can grow sad as metaphor,  
turn, fall forever toward  
the humus that begat it,  
recede until all but madness  
is equivocal, until  
a man must turn inward  
like the multifold whorls  
of this cambial heart,  
or die.

The man stares upward  
at the impenetrable  
exchange of shadow and light  
and tries to imagine a soul,  
mysterious and flammable,  
at centre, maybe, already aflame.